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PAGE 01 SEOUL 09223 0108237
ACTION EA-12
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-12 /084 W
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P R 0107362 NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7305
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN PFOR KS US
SUBJ: KOREAN PRESS COVERS PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR
REF: (A) SEOUL 9104 (DTG 2808227 OCT 77)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY BAF&K DATE 2/12/80

SUMMARY: MORNING KOREAN PRESS FOR NOVEMBER 1 NOTES THAT FONMIN PAK MADE "ONE OR TWO" SUGGESTIONS TO AMBASSADOR YESTERDAY, IN MEETING ON PAK TONG-SON CASE, RETURNING BALL TO U.S. COURT. PAPERS SPECULATE THAT BOTH SIDES ARE MODIFYING THEIR PREVIOUS STANDS AND EMPHASIZE NEED TO SOLVE CASE EXPEDITIOUSLY. END SUMMARY.

1. ON NOVEMBER 1, BOTH KOREAN VERNACULAR DAILIES GAVE TOP COVERAGE TO OCTOBER 31 AFTERNOON MEETING BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER PAK TONG-JIN AND AMBASSADOR SNEIDER ON PAK TONG-SON CASE. PAPERS REPORT THAT FONMIN PAK SAID HE HAD SUGGESTED CONTINUED DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS TO SOLVE PAK TONG-SON CASE AND HAD MADE "ONE OR TWO CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS," BUT COULD NOT REVEAL THEM NOW. FONMIN EMPHASIZED TO REPORTERS THAT THERE HAS BEEN

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 09223 0108237

NO CHANGE IN ROKG POSITION OF MAXIMUM COOPERATION WITHIN LIMITS OF SOVEREIGNTY AND DOMESTIC LAW, AND THAT, IF BOTH ROK AND U.S. UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCES IN POSITIONS AND LEGAL SYSTEMS AND EXERCISE THE SPIRIT OF RECIPROCITY, THERE IS NO REASON NOT TO REACH AGREEMENT ON THE ISSUES. FONMIN EXPRESSED HOPE U.S. WOULD FULLY APPRECIATE THIS INTENTION AND SPIRIT AND WOULD GIVE "AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE," PAPERS SAY FONMIN PAK EMPHASIZED CONTINUITY OF ROKG EFFORTS SINCE ROK-U.S. FONMINS' MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER AND STATED THAT FUTURE CONTACTS MUST AWAIT U.S. RESPONSE. NEVERTHELESS, BOTH PAPERS SEEM TO BE HOPING FOR CHANGE IN BASIC POSITIONS BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE MAINTAINED HERETOFORE, WITH CHOSUN ILBO STATING FLATLY THAT FONMIN PAK HAD HINTED KOREA WOULD SHOW "CONSIDERABLE FLEXIBILITY" IN SETTING CONDITIONS FOR U.S. TO MEET WITH PAK TONG-SON.

2. FRONT-PAGE, SIGNED ANALYSES APPEARED IN BOTH PAPERS. HAN'GUK ILBO WRITER (IDENTIFIED ONLY AS "PYONG") NOTED THAT BOTH SIDES DECIDED TO RETURN CONSIDERATION OF PROBLEM TO

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DIPLOMATIC LEVEL BECAUSE THEY CONCLUDED THERE WAS ALMOST NO POSSIBILITY OF SETTLEMENT ON JUDICIAL WORKING-LEVEL AND IN ACCORD WITH THEIR BASIC POSITION OF SOLVING THE PAK CASE QUICKLY. NO MATTER WHAT.

3. CHOSON ILBO'S REPORTER AN PYONG-HUN, SPECULATING THAT BOTH SIDES HAD AGREED TO RESUME DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE IN ORDER TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY WHICH WOULD LEAD TO ANOTHER ROUND OF JUDICIAL TALKS. CONCLUDES THAT PROSPECTS FOR THIS NEGOTIATION ARE NOT BRIGHT. IN REVIEWING LACK OF CHANGE IN BASIC POSITIONS OVER PAST YEAR, AN EXPRESSED HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH "VARIOUS PRESSURES" U.S. HAS BROUGHT TO BEAR ON KOREA: PROSPECT OF U.S. HOUSE'S PASSING RESOLUTION CALLING ON ROKG

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FOR FULL COOPERATION IN PAK CASE AND BRAKE WHICH HOUSE HAS APPLIED TO BILL FOR ARMS TRANSFER AS COMPENSATION FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL. AN CARRIES HIS ANALYSIS TO POINT OF STATING THAT ROK SHOULD NOT FEAR EVEN DEFEAT OF ARMS TRANSFER BILL. BECAUSE U.S. HAS PROMISED NOT TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT COMPENSATORY MEASURES AND BECAUSE U.S. PUBLIC OPINION WOULD THEN CALL FOR MODIFICATION OF THE WITHDRAWAL PLANS. IN END, HOWEVER, AN CONCLUDES THAT ISSUE IN KOREAN-U.S. RELATIONS IS WHETHER U.S. PUBLIC OPINION. A PILLAR OF ROK SECURITY, CONTINUES TO WORSEN AS RESULT OF PAK TONG-SON CASE. SEPARATE CHOSON GOSSIP COLUMN NOTES THAT FONMIN, IN RESPONSE TO REPORTERS' SPECULATION THAT POK INITIATIVE MIGHT MARK A TURNING POINT IN PAK AFFAIR, WOULD SAY ONLY "THAT DEPENDS ON THE U.S.'S ATTITUDE IN THE FUTURE."

4. ABOVE NEWS AND ANALYSIS REPRESENTS CONTINUATION OF A NUMBER OF PRESS ITEMS WHICH APPEARED OVER WEEKEND, NOTING NEED FOR SPEEDY SETTLEMENT OF PAK CASE.

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